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Message Text

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TAGS: POR;

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: YUGOSLAV EFFECTIVENESS AT
THE HAVANA NON-ALIGNED MEETING

REF: A) STATE 142045, B) USUN 2340, C) TEHRAN 5281

1. INTRODUCTION. THIS IS AN ASSESSMENT OF THE YUGOSLAV
ROLE AT THE RECENT HAVANA MEETING OF THE NON-ALIGNED
COORDINATING BUREAU (NACB). IT IS INTENDED FOR THE
INFORMATION OF THE EMBASSY TO HELP SUSTAIN THE
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US-YUGOSLAV DIALOGUE ON THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM),
IN WHICH THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE A PARALLEL INTEREST.
IT DRAWS ON REPORTING FROM USINT HAVANA, SOME PUBLIC
MATERIALS AND CONVERSATIONS WITH HAVANA PARTICIPANTS
IN NEW YORK.

2. THE OVER-RIDING ISSUES FOR THE YUGOSLAVS AT

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HAVANA APPARENTLY WERE MAINTAINING"NON-ALIGNED UNITY, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE PROSPECTIVE NON-ALIGNED - MINISTERIAL MEETING IN BELGRADE, AND PREVENTING ADOPTION BY THE NAM OF A PRO-SOVIET IDEOLOGICAL POSITION. CUBA WAS A RELATED PROBLEM FOR YUGOSLAVIA SINCE ITS CONTROVERSIAL POLICIES IN AFRICA HAVE THREATENED TO SPLIT THE NAM, AND CUBA'S LEADERSHIP ASPIRATIONS HAVE BEEN PERCEIVED AS A

THREAT TO YUGOSLAVIA'S OWN LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE MOVEMENT.

3. THE YUGOSLAVS RESPONDED TO THE CUBAN CHALLENGE WITH INCREASING OPENNESS IN THE YEAR BETWEEN THE NEW DELHI AND HAVANA NACB MEETINGS, TAKING THE LEAD IN TRYING TO GALVANIZE NON-ALIGNED MODERATES TO ASSERT THEMSELVES AS A COUNTER-WEIGHT TO THE CUBANS. DESPITE SOME SUCCESS IN BLUNTING CUBAN INITIATIVES AT HAVANA, HOWEVER, YUGOSLAVIA'S EFFECTIVENESS AT THE MEETING, AS MEASURED IN TERMS OF CONTAINING THE CUBAN CHALLENGE, WAS LIMITED BY ITS DESIRE TO MAINTAIN NAM UNITY.

4. THE YUGOSLAVS VIEWED CUBAN ATTEMPTS TO INJECT PRO-SOVIET FORMULATIONS INTO THE HAVANA FINAL COMMUNIQUE AS AN EFFORT TO BUILD AN IDEOLOGICAL BASE FOR CUBA'S NAM PRESIDENCY (BEGINNING IN 1979). THEY APPARENTLY WORKED CLOSELY WITH INDIA AND SRI LANKA TO MAKE SURE CONFIDENTIAL

THE COMMUNIQUE WAS NOT ENTIRELY ONE-SIDED AND ANTI-WESTERN. YUGOSLAVIA SUCCEEDED IN INSERTING LANGUAGE BRACKETING "IMPERIALISM" AND "HEGEMONISM," AS WELL AS IN EXPANDING THE DEFINITION OF IMPERIALISM TO INCLUDE "ALL ITS FORMS." SEVERAL PATENTLY SOVIET-INSPIRED PROPOSALS, ESPECIALLY IN THE DISARMAMENT FIELD, WERE DROPPED FROM THE COMMUNIQUE AT THE INSISTENCE OF THE MODERATES. THE YUGOSLAV PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH MACHINERY FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, ALTHOUGH NOT DIRECTLY AIMED AT ANY SINGLE COUNTRY, SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DESIGNED, IN PART, TO REDUCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CUBAN INTERVENTION IN REGIONAL DISPUTES.

5. HOWEVER, THE YUGOSLAVS' CONCERN ABOUT THE CUBAN CHALLENGE WAS MORE THAN MATCHED BY THEIR COMMITMENT TO NAM UNITY, AND THEY CONSCIOUSLY AVOIDED CONFRONTATIONS THAT WOULD HAVE DISRUPTED THE MEETING. THEY WERE UNHAPPY WITH THE CHANGE OF VENUE FROM KABUL TO HAVANA, FOLLOWING THE AFGHAN COUP, BUT MADE NO OBJECTION TO IT. INDEED, YUGOSLAV UNHAPPINESS MAY HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED AS MUCH BY THE WORRY THAT SOME NACB FOREIGN

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MINISTERS MIGHT STAY AWAY FROM HAVANA AS BY THE TACTICAL ADVANTAGE GAINED BY CUBA. ONCE AT HAVANA, THE YUGOSLAVS APPARENTLY WERE LESS ACTIVE THAN THE INDIANS IN DEFENDING MODERATE INTERESTS AND DID NOT LODGE RESERVATIONS ON ANY QUESTION, DESPITE THE FAIRLY LARGE NUMBER OF OTHER MODERATES WHO DID SO. THERE IS LITTLE INFORMATION ON YUGOSLAVIA'S POSITIONS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES. THE YUGOSLAVS WORKED ACTIVELY TO

PREVENT THE ISSUE OF CUBAN INTERVENTION IN AFRICA FROM SURFACING IN HAVANA. YUGOSLAV SOURCES (REFTEL C) INDICATED THAT ANY EFFORT TO CRITICIZE THE CUBANS WOULD HAVE PROVOKED A COUNTERATTACK ON FRENCH ACTIVITIES -- AND AN "IMPOSSIBLY DIVISIVE" SITUATION -- CONFIDENTIAL

BUT THEY PROBABLY WOULD HAVE OPPOSED OPEN CRITICISM OF THE CUBANS EVEN IF THERE HAD BEEN NO FRENCH EXCUSE FOR SILENCE. ANY YUGOSLAV PRESSURES TO ENCOURAGE CUBAN RESTRAINT IN AFRICA WERE BILATERAL OR EXERCISED, AS IN THE CASE OF THE IDEOLOGICAL RHETORIC OF THE COMMUNIQUE, BY INDIRECTION. THIS ALLOWED CUBA TO ASSERT DURING THE MEETING THAT ITS POLICIES WERE APPROVED BY THE NAM AS AN EXTENSION OF THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST STRUGGLE.

6. IN SUM, THE YUGOSLAV APPROACH SUCCEEDED IN PRESERVING AT LEAST THE APPEARANCE OF NAM UNITY AT HAVANA BUT AT THE PRICE OF STRENGTHENING CUBA AGAINST FUTURE CHALLENGES FROM WITHIN THE MOVEMENT. THUS, THE CUBAN DILEMMA CONTINUES FOR YUGOSLAVIA.

7. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO ENGAGE FON OFF IN DISCUSSION OF THE RECENTLY-CONCLUDED HAVANA MEETING, DRAWING ON REFTEL (A) AS APPROPRIATE. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE YUGOSLAVS' ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE NAM WITH RESPECT TO THE CUBANS, AND OF THEIR VIEWS OF THE LIKELY SCENARIO AT BELGRADE.

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